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GENERAL PLAN FOR THE DEVELOPMENT
OF THE TOWN OF ATHERTON

1. Pursuant to the requirements of Section 65300 et. seq. of the Government Code of the State of California, the following is adopted as the General Plan of the Town of Atherton, to include:

- (a) Land use element
- (b) Circulation element
- (c) Housing element
- (d) Conservation element
- (e) Open space element
- (f) Recreation element
- (g) Seismic safety element
- (h) Noise element
- (i) Scenic highway element
- (j) Safety element

City planning Atherton

2. Goals:

The Town of Atherton desires insofar as possible to preserve its character as a scenic, rural, thickly wooded, residential area, with abundant open space and with streets designed primarily as scenic routes rather than for speed of travel.

3. Land use element

The land use element of the General Plan is contained in Zoning Regulations as amended from time to time. At the present time the bulk of such regulations is contained in Ordinance No. 277.

4. Circulation element

Goals: In keeping with the general goal of preserving the streets of Atherton as scenic routes, the following basic goals have been adopted:

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a. No street under the control of the Town shall be more than two lanes in width.

b. Meandering street lines shall be preserved, consistent with traffic safety.

c. Streets shall be surfaced to the extent necessary for safety reasons.

d. No curbs or sidewalks shall be constructed, but suitable pedestrian, bicycle or equestrian paths shall be maintained.

e. Traffic speed shall be carefully controlled. Special attention shall be given to establishment of maximum speed limits, as the need is shown, on a street-by-street basis.

f. Specimen trees located in the right-of-way shall be preserved, to the extent consistent with traffic safety.

g. Street lights and signs shall be kept to a minimum.

h. A public street shall be accepted by the Town only on condition that it has been improved in accordance with Town standards existing at the time of acceptance.

i. On-street and visible off-street parking of vehicles and other means of transportation shall be carefully controlled.

j. Use of Town streets as a thoroughfare by trucks and other large vehicles shall be carefully controlled.

5. Housing element

a. It is Town policy to promote open and free choice of housing regardless of age, race or ethnic background.



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Such steps will be taken as necessary to encourage residents and realtors operating within the Town to live up to such policy.

b. Since the geographical limits of the Town have been almost entirely developed, with acceptable structures located upon almost all lots, no further plans for development or redevelopment are deemed feasible at this time.

c. It is deemed that the development of high density and high rise living structures or commercial structures would destroy the scenic rural and open space character of the Town. Furthermore, since the Town is in fact a small geographical area which is integrated for a number of other purposes with surrounding municipalities, it is considered that no significant countervailing purpose would be accomplished by eliminating open space within the Town in order to permit the construction of high rise, and high density housing or commercial structures.

d. Three residential districts have been established to provide for varying minimum lot sizes.

e. It is the policy of the Town to require elimination of non conforming structures as a condition to the grant of a subdivision or merger of existing lots, in order to improve the quality of structures in the Town to the extent possible.

6. Conservation element

a. Town policy seeks to preserve specimen trees wherever possible.

b. Town policy seeks to preserve old residential structures which continue to have a useful life.

c. Town policy seeks to avoid the development of

arterial highways through the Town to the extent that their existence and use would destroy the rural character of the Town.

It is recognized that El Camino Real must be larger than a two-lane highway. Yet Town policy seeks to limit its intrusion upon the ecology of the Town insofar as possible. To this end, it is Town policy to preserve center planting on El Camino Real, to minimize the number of lots with access onto El Camino Real, to promote the maintenance of walls, shrubbery and trees along the sides of El Camino Real, and minimize the number of traffic signs erected thereon.

It is found that the widening of Alameda de las Pulgas, Middlefield Road, Marsh Road, or Oak Grove Avenue or any other street beyond their present two-lane size would seriously endanger Atherton's rural ecology. Traffic would be inevitably increased, with attendant increase of air and noise pollution and elimination of the fragile rural quality of these streets which is sought to be preserved. Town policy seeks to minimize the number of lots with access onto Alameda de las Pulgas and Middlefield Road.

d. Town policy seeks to reduce air and noise pollution.

7. Open Space element

a. The Town seeks to preserve the presently existing open space and vistas of trees and shrubbery. To this end minimum lot sizes have been established for each of the three land use districts. Minimum set backs have been established for front, side and rear yards in each district. Such minimum lot sizes and set backs are subject to variance, but it is Town policy to grant such variances only in very

unusual cases, in order to preserve the open space characteristics of Atherton. The open space feeling of Atherton is further preserved by prohibition of structures higher than 2-1/2 stories (38 feet) in order that high rise structures may not destroy the landscape of the Town and the privacy of residents of low level homes. Similarly, Town policy seeks to minimize the existence of signs, visible vehicle parking, high walls and other structures which would otherwise interfere with the natural vistas of trees and shrubbery.

b. The Town also seeks to preserve the open space characteristics of existing schools, churches, Menlo School and College and the California Water Service Property, as well as of Holbrook-Palmer Park.

8. Recreation element

a. Inherent in the plan for large lot sizes, set backs and streets which constitute minimal traffic hazards is the concept that there will be places for children to play, and adults to engage in sports, bicycle riding and walking. The extensive public elementary and high school properties are also available for recreational use.

b. Holbrook-Palmer Park was devised to the Town to be held and used by the Town as a public recreational park subject to the condition that the property "shall not be used, occupied or operated for commercial or housing purposes, excepting only such (if any) as may be strictly incidental and appropriate to its use as a public recreational park." The park is to be used for the benefit of the citizens of Atherton. It may not be used by a business venture to promote its own business. Town policy forbids its use for political purposes except such as involve the public affairs of the Town of Atherton as a whole. The Park has been

developed not as an athletic park but rather as a place of beauty. Certain general policies under which the Park may be used by private groups are as follows:

Subject to issuance of use permit by the Town, the Park is available for use by social organizations which include a substantial number of Atherton residents as members. It is not available for individual social purposes such as private parties, other than semi-public functions such as wedding receptions of Atherton residents.

A service charge may be made by the Town for use of the Park. Organizations authorized to use the Park may charge their own members in excess of costs incurred in holding a function at the Park, but profits made by an organization from use of the Park should be applied for the benefit of the Park or to some specific charitable purpose related to the Town of Atherton or the community.

9. Seismic safety element

Attached hereto as Exhibit A are maps published by the United States Geological Survey showing seismic hazards in the area of the Town. Such hazards shall be taken into account by the Planning Commission, the Town Council and the administration of the Town in connection with all projects.

10. Noise element

Noise levels shall be controlled by legislation, in pursuit of the overall goal of maintaining Atherton as a rural residential area. Upon completion of a survey of noise contours in compliance with the provisions of Section 65302 (g) of the Government Code of the State of California, as amended, such information will be attached to the General Plan as Exhibit B, and will be updated from time to time.

It is not considered necessary at the present time that

the effect of noise impact in the Town of Atherton should result in any change of land uses.

11. Scenic Highway element

The geographical area of Atherton includes no highways designated as scenic highways pursuant to the provisions of Section 260 et seq. of the California Streets and Highways Code. As stated elsewhere herein (Paragraph 4, Circulation Element; Paragraph 6, Conservation Element), Town policy seeks to limit the intrusion of streets and highways upon the ecology of the Town insofar as possible. Town policy seeks to preserve all streets and highways as scenic routes.

12. Safety element

(a) Fire protection is under the jurisdiction of the Menlo Park Fire Protection District.

(b) Evacuation routes shall be established and reviewed from time to time as part of the Town's Civil Defense and Disaster Plan.

(c) Peak Water Supply requirements shall be required to be met by the California Water Service Company or other utility, pursuant to franchise.

(d) Minimum road widths and clearances around structures shall be in accordance with generally recognized minimums consistent with fire protection.

(e) Geologic hazard maps in accordance with the Seismic Safety element hereof shall be updated from time to time so as to include the latest available information.

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